

Vancouver Olympics Games

<http://www.vancouver2010.com/>

<http://www.olympic.org/en/content/Olympic-Games/>

1. How many days are there until the Games begin?
2. Where is the Olympic Torch today?
3. How many days will the Games last for?
4. How many sports are there in the Winter Olympics?
5. List three of the sports.
6. How many medals in total did the United States win in Torino 2006?
7. Name three 2010 Olympic venues.
8. Name one legendary athlete from United States.
9. What sport did this athlete compete in?

The Ancient Olympic Games

Directions: *Read the passage and complete the activities that follow.*

The ancient Olympic Games were far different from the Olympic Games of today. The ancient games were part of religious festivals held to honor Zeus, the king of Greek gods. The games combined athletic competition with religious worship.

The first games on record were held in 776 B.C. The games took place every four years in the valley of Olympia, in western Greece. The different Greek city-states sent their finest athletes to the games, which were held only in the summer. During the long war between Sparta and Athens, truces were called in order to hold the games.

The first Olympics consisted of just footraces. Over time, chariot races, boxing, and other events were added to the Olympics. Winners received crowns of wild olive leaves.

Only males competed in the ancient games, and only males could watch. The only exception was for priestesses. Sometimes women disguised themselves to attend the games. But these women took a great risk. If they were discovered, they were put to death.

After the Roman Empire conquered Greece, the games lost their religious meaning. Athletes competed mainly for money rather than to glorify the gods. The games declined so much in quality that the Roman emperor banned them in A.D. 394. They were not held again until more than 1,500 years later.

1. Identify six ways in which the ancient Olympic Games were different from the Olympics as you know them today.
2. Based on what you know about ancient Greek culture, explain why women were not allowed to compete in the Olympic Games.
3. Based on what you know about the education of Spartan males, do you think they would have been good or poor athletes? Explain your answer.